3.

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Complex NPs, subjacency, and extraposition

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Chomsky (1986, p. 40) argues that *t* in (1) cannot be the source of the extraposition and explains this by the principle of subjacency which says that only one barrier may be crossed by extraposition. See also Baltin 1981 on extraposition and subjacency.

(1)   a.   [$_{NP}$ Many books [$_{PP}$ with [stories t]] t'] were sold [that I wanted to read].
      b.   [$_{NP}$ Many proofs [$_{PP}$ of [the theorem t]] t'] appeared [that I wanted to think about].

Grewendorf (1988,p. 281), Haider (1996, p.261) and Rohrer (1996, p.103) assumed that subjacency also plays a role for extraposition in German, but if one substitutes the head noun in (1) in a way that reduces attachment ambiguities these examples can be translated to German without resulting in unacceptable sentences:

(2)   weil viele Schallplatten mit Geschichten verkauft wurden, die ich noch lesen wollte.
      because many records with stories sold were that I yet read wanted
      'because many records with stories that I wanted to read were sold.'

A plausible context for (2) would be a situation where the speaker goes to a record shop and certain records remind him that he wanted to buy the respective books to read the stories. In general, there seems to be no upper limit for the number of phrase nodes that may be crossed by dislocation to the right:

(3)   Karl hat mir [eine Kopie [einer Fälschung [des Bildes [einer Frau t$_i$]]]] gegeben,
      [die schon lange tot ist]$_i$.
      'Karl gave me a copy of a forgery of the picture of a woman who has been dead
      for a long time.'

As (3) shows, relative clauses can be extraposed from an arbitrarily deeply embedded NP. Note that the examples are constructed in a way that excludes all other attachments. For semantic reasons the relative clause can only refer to Frau ('woman'). Similarly, complement clauses can be extraposed from an arbitrarily deeply embedded NP:

(4)   Ich habe [von [dem Versuch [eines Beweises [der Vermutung t$_i$]]]] gehört, [daß
      es Zahlen gibt, die die folgenden Bedingungen erfüllen]$_i$.
      I have of the attempt of a proof of the assumption heard that it numbers gives
      that the following conditions satisfy
      'I have heard of the attempt to prove the assumption that there are numbers for
      which the following conditions hold.'

The example in (5) is a corpus example where a sentential complement is extraposed over two NP borders:

(5) Für das Volk der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik ist dabei [die einmütige
Bekräftigung [der Auffassung t_i]] wichtig, [daß es die Interessen des Friedens
und der Sicherheit erfordern, daß [...]]$_i$. (Neues Deutschland, 06.12.1969, p.1)
'…the unanimous confirmation of the opinion … that the interests of peace and
security require that [...]'

The data seem to show that Ross' Complex NP Constraint (Ross 1967) does not universally hold for movement to the right and that subjacency is not universally relevant for this type of movement either. Movement to the right differs from movement to the left in that it is clause bounded, i.e., extraposed material may not leave finite clauses or projections of *zu* infinitives in so-called incoherent constructions in German (Haider 1991, p.4), but this boundedness can not be explained by the Subjacency Principle with reference to maximal projections of arbitrary syntactic categories.

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